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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 15 December 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. EL HOUDERI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)
(Vice-President)

- The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina: report of the Secretary-General [143] (continued)

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Elhouderi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 143 (continued)

THE SITUATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/747)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I remind representatives that, in accordance with the decision taken yesterday afternoon, the list of speakers in the debate on this item will be closed this morning at 11 a.m.

Mr. AL-NI'MAH (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): It is my honour to address the General Assembly today on behalf of the Group of Arab States in my capacity as Chairman of the group for December.

Like all other States which respect human rights, the Arab States are extremely alarmed by the continued Serbian aggression against the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is the victim of a genocidal war under the euphemistic name of "ethnic cleansing", which is a retrograde reminder of similar human tragedies of the past. Everyone thought those days were gone forever. Everyone thought we lived in an age of international law and respect for the right of peoples to self-determination, an age where respect for human rights had pride of place in the actions of all States.

Furthermore, this situation constitutes a flagrant act of aggression against the territorial integrity of an independent State Member of the United Nations, with the aim of annexing its territory to that of the aggressor State for the purpose of creating a so-called Greater Serbia. The international community should never have stood by, with its hands tied behind its back, in the face of all those actions, as it has done so far.

(Mr. Al-Ni'mah, Qatar)

In the gloom of this darkness, however, we see a glimmer of hope which, we trust, will develop into a new dawn. There are indications that some of the most important and urgent demands of the Islamic and Arab States and of enlightened public opinion that cherishes international legality, are about to be met. Those demands are as follows: enforcement of the no-fly zone in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina - by force if necessary; and lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina to enable its people effectively to exercise their right of legitimate self-defence.

The machinery required to meet the first demand is available now as announced, last Friday, by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), following a meeting of its ministers of defence, when the Alliance's Secretary-General stated that the NATO allies were ready to provide all the means necessary to enforce the no-fly zone in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina by force, as soon as that is requested by the Security Council.

Thus, it has become abundantly clear that there is no longer even the flimsiest of excuses for the Security Council to hold back and not adopt a new resolution that would stipulate the implementation of its resolution 781 (1992) by all necessary means, including the use of force.

We call upon the United States Administration, without delay, to work towards the adoption of such a resolution by the Security Council before the end of that Administration in a few weeks time, as the situation will brook no further delay.

(Mr. Al-Ni'mah, Qatar)

The President-elect declared last Friday his support for the use of force to enforce the no-fly zone in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, it behoves the current administration to take the lead and initiative for the adoption by the Security Council of such a resolution in its remaining term of office. A cause for optimism in this regard is the statement made last Saturday by the United States Secretary of State to the effect that the United States administration is currently reconsidering the possibility of the use of force to enforce the no-fly zone. He went on to add that in view of the continuous deterioration of the situation, the present administration cannot stand by and leave the taking of the decision to the incoming administration.

As to the lifting of the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is reason to expect a positive development in this regard, in view of the reports that the United States administration is about to reconsider the whole issue, and that the administration views the possibility of lifting the embargo in a more positive light. The United States Secretary of State has stated that he will discuss this question in his meetings this week in some European capitals with the aim of arriving at a consensus on the lifting of the arms embargo imposed against the Muslims of Bosnia. We expect a resolution to lift that embargo to be adopted. It has become abundantly clear to all that the imposition of the embargo on the victims of aggression side by side with the aggressor is an irony that cannot stand to reason and cannot be accepted by human conscience. Self-defence is a basic right guaranteed by the Charter of the United Nations. The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina must be enabled to defend itself so long as the international community is unable to take a resolute stand and deter the Serbian aggression by the means stipulated in the Charter.

(Mr. Al-Ni'mah, Qatar)

As for the other demand of the Arab States, namely the call to try as war criminals the perpetrators of the "ethnic cleansing" atrocities, there appears to be progress in that direction. The United States Secretary of State stated yesterday in Stockholm that the United States administration has gathered information and carried out investigations concerning the acts perpetrated by some individuals as a preliminary step to bringing them to justice.

We look forward to the adoption by the Security Council in the next few days of a resolution on the use of force for the implementation of its resolution 781 (1992) concerning the no-fly zone and of another resolution in which Bosnia and Herzegovina would be exempted from the arms embargo imposed against the entities that constituted the former Yugoslavia. Together with other States, we call upon the Security Council to adopt a resolution to this effect without any further delay. Short of doing this, the aggressor will persist in its aggression and the international community will continue to appear to be paralysed in the face of that continued aggression. This is a position that neither the members assembled here nor the peace-loving peoples of the world would accept.

God almighty has created us all. And although we may differ, God has ordained that we should stand together to defend what is right and to repel aggression. He created us and gave us different religions that make up our human heritage according to the words of the Koran and the Bible.

In the statement he made during the inauguration of the Consultative Assembly, His Highness the Emir of my country expressed our position as follows:

(Mr. Al-Ni'mah, Qatar)

"The Muslim people in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina face barbaric acts of aggression at the hands of the Serbian forces. The international action taken so far has not been sufficient to put an end to this tragedy. We support the resolutions adopted by the Organization of the Islamic Conference in this regard. We deem it to be appropriate to set a time-frame for the implementation of the Security Council resolutions adopted in relation to this conflict. We support the proposed measures aimed at the adoption by the United Nations of even stricter and sterner measures, including military intervention. The resolutions on Somalia adopted recently by the Security Council may pave the way towards the adoption of similar resolutions on Bosnia and Herzegovina that would alleviate the suffering of its people and enable them to defend themselves. This can be achieved through the lifting of the arms embargo against them in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, which guarantees the legitimate right to self-defence for all States."

Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia): Since the Assembly met at the resumed forty-sixth session last August, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has continued to deteriorate and has exacerbated the dangerous trends of widening turbulence in the region. The Government and people of Indonesia have followed daily reports of escalating violence, mounting casualties and increased human deprivation with deepening concern and indignation. The reports of the Secretary-General and the recent debate in the Security Council testify to the horrendous toll in human lives and the wanton destruction of cultural and religious landmarks. Indeed, the situation has been further aggravated by blatant attempts to expand by force the areas controlled by ethnic groups, the deadly manoeuvres to starve people into submission, the

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

bombardment of cities and towns, and worst of all, the unconscionable policy and practice of "ethnic cleansing". In the meantime, a disaster of massive proportions now looms on the horizon with the onset of winter.

Reflecting the grave concern of the international community, the Tenth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Jakarta last September, focused particular attention on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

The Summit condemned the atrocities being committed against the civilian population and the massive violation of human rights and demanded the immediate withdrawal of all external forces, the release of all prisoners, the dismantling of detention centres and the right of all refugees to return to their homes.

Those attending the Sixth Extraordinary Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which met early this month in Jeddah, also expressed profound concern over the dramatic deterioration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and reaffirmed their commitment to restore peace in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Since the eruption of the conflict, considerable efforts have been made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and by the European Community with a view to a cease-fire and to the creation of an atmosphere conducive to reaching a negotiated settlement that would be both comprehensive and lasting. Likewise, we have placed our confidence in the Security Council, which has remained seized of this question since the outbreak of conflict in the region and has adopted numerous resolutions in its continuing endeavours to terminate the hostilities. Thus, the imposition of economic sanctions, the ban on all military flights in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the decision to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the provision for stricter enforcement of economic sanctions represent a modicum of progress. However, the initiatives undertaken by the United Nations to bring an end to the fighting and the grave violations of international humanitarian law have thus far proved to be of only limited success.

It has been over a year since the general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Yugoslavia was imposed by the

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Security Council, and one year to the day that the Committee to ensure its application was established. Taken together, they have had little obvious impact in deterring aggression by what had previously been one of the largest armies in Europe, well trained and well equipped. It has, however, deprived an ill-equipped Bosnian people of their right to self-defence as set forth under article 51 of the Charter. The Indonesian delegation therefore believes that the Security Council should respond to the appeals that have been made by many Member States to implement a selective and partial lifting of the arms embargo to enable Bosnia and Herzegovina to defend itself against aggression and massive violations of international humanitarian law. Such an approach alone would compel the Serbians to seek negotiations in good faith and to achieve a durable political settlement.

In this regard, my delegation shares the widely held view that the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina along ethnic or religious lines would fail to resolve the problem. It would, rather, result in prolonged turmoil and perpetuate regional instability by setting the stage for future conflicts. The Secretary-General has rightly stated, in his report contained in document S/24795:

> "The population of Bosnia and Herzegovina is inextricably intermingled. Thus there appears to be no viable way to create three territorially distinct States based on ethnic or confessional principles." (S/24795, para. 36)

Likewise, Security Council resolution 787 (1992) has categorically affirmed that

> "any taking of territory by force or any practice of 'ethnic cleansing' is unlawful and unacceptable, and will not be permitted to affect the

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outcome of negotiations on constitutional arrangements for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and insists that all displaced persons be enabled to return in peace to their former homes". (Security Council resolution 787 (1992), para. 2)

We are faced with the grave danger of the elimination of a State Member of the United Nations as a result of unabated aggression and the extermination of its people. The Indonesian delegation therefore urges the full implementation of all Security Council resolutions and calls for the international community to extend support to Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in the exercise of its rights under Article 51 of the Charter. We call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, for an end to the unmitigated violence, particularly the genocidal "ethnic cleansing", and for assurances of non-intervention by outside forces. Humanitarian assistance must be allowed to be delivered without hindrance. In addition, those responsible for committing grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law must be identified and held responsible. The decision by the Security Council in its resolution 780 (1992), requesting the Secretary-General to establish an impartial Commission of Experts to investigate evidence of grave violations of the Geneva Conventions and other international humanitarian laws, is a necessary and welcome step.

Finally, we reiterate our support for the institutional mechanisms that were established at the London Conference and its "Statement of Principles" which includes, inter alia, the fundamental obligation to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States in the region. A negotiated political settlement must be achieved if we are to avert an escalation of violence and the spread of hostilities. We express our hope

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that the United Nations will act effectively, with determination and resolve, to uphold the principles enshrined in its Charter and give meaning to the reaffirmation of collective security against threats of aggression that was issued at the Summit Meeting of the Security Council earlier this year.

Mr. KHOSHROO (Islamic Republic of Iran): For more than a year the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been violated, and, as a result, the defenceless people of that country have been the object of foreign aggression and a systematic campaign of genocide aimed at the extermination of this young Republic. Thousands of people have been massacred by the Serbian forces through indiscriminate ground and air attacks on civilian centres. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have been expelled, deported and imprisoned in concentration camps in the pursuit of the abhorrent practice of "ethnic cleansing", which constitutes an act of genocide and is reminiscent of some of the saddest chapters in human history. Moreover, the Serbs have persistently impeded the delivery of urgently needed food and medical supplies to the civilian population and have used heating, electricity and food as weapons in order to force the non-Serb population in Bosnia and Herzegovina to accept their aggressive demands. As the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights stated in his report of 6 November 1992,

> "ethnic cleansing does not appear to be the consequence of the war, but rather its goal". (A/47/635, para. 6)

Furthermore, the ongoing conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina poses the grave risk of spilling over to adjacent areas. The increasing tension in Kosovo, Vojvodina and Sandjak is a source of concern, and the prospects of violence in these areas could lead to a wider regional conflagration.

(Mr. Khoshroo, Islamic Republic of Iran)

It is evident that what the world is witnessing in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a clear case of aggression perpetrated by the authorities in Belgrade and their surrogates in Bosnia against a Member of the United Nations. It is worth reviewing the Security Council's reaction during the crisis in the face of such Serbian aggression. Under the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. The Security Council has so far adopted many resolutions with regard to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but none of them has addressed the real cause of the tragedy. The Security Council has dealt only with the effects of the crisis and, even there, it has faced Serbian intransigence.

The Serbian forces have violated all the Security Council resolutions, both when the cessation of hostilities was called for and when the Security Council decided to ban military flights in the airspace of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Had the Security Council acted resolutely when its first resolution was violated by the Serbs, the defenceless people of Bosnia and Herzegovina would not have had to be subjected to the present situation, which is close to the total annihilation of their country. In fact, the Serbs have not been given a clear signal that enough is enough and that they cannot continue the aggression with impunity.

One may wonder why Serbia and Montenegro and the Serb ultra-nationalists should change their attitudes. Why should they change their course of action when they have the military power and the military upper hand and continue to receive sophisticated armaments, while their victims lack the most basic means of self-defence and are subjected to an arms embargo as well? We should admit that the current measures against the aggressors have not reversed the

(Mr. Khoshroo, Islamic Republic of Iran)

aggression, and much more ought to be done on the basis of the United Nations Charter in order to safeguard the territorial integrity of a State Member of the Organization - the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina - thereby upholding the credibility and authority of the United Nations.

The international community welcomed the convening of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia to achieve a just and peaceful settlement in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Nobody can deny the efforts of the co-sponsors of the London Conference, but neither can anybody deny the fact that the Serbs have continued to flout the commitments they made at the Conference. The population of concentration camps has increased, and the air attacks and heavy shelling against the towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina have continued.

What is to be done in the face of these continued acts of aggression? The latest statement of the Security Council of 3 December, 1992, declared that

> "If such attacks and actions continue, the Security Council will consider, as soon as possible, further measures against those who commit or support them ..." (S/PV. 3146, p. 6)

Under the present cruel state of affairs, one cannot but conclude that the Serbian aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has reached such enormous proportions that invoking Article 42 of the United Nations Charter is the only real and genuine further measure that the Security Council can take.

Less than four months ago the General Assembly, as the only truly representative organ of the United Nations, convened to discuss the tragic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and adopted resolution 46/242 by an

(Mr. Khoshroo, Islamic Republic of Iran)

overwhelming majority. That resolution, which represents the collective will of the majority of the membership of the United Nations, reaffirmed, inter alia, the right of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to self-defence. Many speakers at those meetings believed that if the Security Council was not prepared to shoulder its responsibility under Article 42 of the Charter, it should recognize the fact that the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Today we are meeting again to consider the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The situation has deteriorated since August, when the General Assembly considered the issue, owing to continued Serbian aggression and total disregard for the decisions of the Security Council, international law and international legitimacy. The Serbs continue to grab more land, and some of the cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have fallen because the defenders ran out of ammunition. How can the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina defend itself against one of the largest armies in Europe when the United Nations is not in a position to offer it defence and security and thereby safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of one of its Members?

Recently the Sixth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers requested the Security Council to clarify the aituation and declare explicitly that the arms embargo against former Yugoslavia imposed by resolution 713 (1991) does not apply to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which comprises about one third of the membership of the United Nations, also requested the Security Council to review by 15 January 1993 the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the implementation of relevant Security

(Mr. Khoshroo, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Council resolutions and the London Conference agreements. In fact, the latest decision of the OIC stems from the fact that the Islamic countries, along with many others, feel a sense of frustration as they witness the extermination and extinction of a nation.

The General Assembly should send a strong signal to the aggressors that the international community will not stand on the sidelines watching the attempt at the total annihilation of a State Member of the United Nations. The General Assembly, in our view, should, first, urge the Security Council to implement and enforce immediately all existing resolutions with respect to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and issue an ultimatum to the Serbian forces to stop their aggression or face authorization by the Security Council of the use of all necessary means to uphold and restore the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Secondly, the Assembly should urge the Security Council to lift the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina and establish safe areas in Sarajevo and other Bosnian towns. Thirdly, it should reiterate the necessity to enforce immediately Security Council resolution 781 (1992) banning all military flights over Bosnia and Herzegovina. Fourthly, the Assembly should establish an international war-crimes tribunal to try and punish those who have committed war crimes in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Fifthly, it should request the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia to report to the General Assembly on the reasons for the lack of progress in the work of the Working Group on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(Mr. Khoshroo, Islamic Republic of Iran)

In conclusion, I should like to stress that the time factor is essential. The Security Council should be urged to act expeditiously. The Security Council at this juncture has the greatest responsibility to save a nation. Any move on the part of the Security Council short of lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot stop the aggression. Furthermore, the United Nations should encourage more shipments of humanitarian aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina so that the innocent people of that country can survive the winter. The people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran have mobilized their resources to assist the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this respect, several air lifts and truck caravans of humanitarian relief supplies have been dispatched to that country.

The future will judge our actions and deeds today. We should try to rectify our poor record of inadequate response to the Bosnian call for help so that we can succeed in fulfilling our international obligations. The safety of the Bosnian people can be restored only through strong, resolute and immediate actions.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): The tragic developments witnessed by the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina are cause for grave concern. The situation has deteriorated at an alarming pace. The delegation of Egypt wishes to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the fact that these developments tend to set a dangerous precedent, namely the possibility that a Member State could be overwhelmed and wiped off the face of the earth by the force of arms.

The events now taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the direct results of the naked military aggression perpetrated by Serbia against the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim of achieving expansionist ambitions relating to the design of establishing the so-called "greater Serbia" by the force of arms. In so doing, Serbia is exploiting its military superiority over its newly independent neighbours.

Consequently, it is essential, in dealing with this crisis, to address its root causes. This we shall not be able to do unless international action is taken to put an end to the aggression and to put a stop to all its attendant practices. This we have to do in reaffirmation of the principle of inadmissibility of the use of force in international relations.

Proceeding from all this it is essential for the Security Council to fully review the contents of all the resolutions it has adopted so far on Bosnia and Herzegovina and to discharge its responsibilities under the Charter in order to enforce the implementation of those resolutions within a time-frame that is commensurate with the gravity of the deteriorating situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Security Council must take definite steps in order for it to enforce the implementation of its resolutions:

Firstly, it should set a deadline for the implementation of its relevant resolutions; secondly, if Serbia and Montenegro persist in their

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

intransigence, the Security Council should impose the measures stipulated by Chapter 7 of the Charter in order to force the aggressor to respect the rules of international legality; thirdly, the embargo imposed by virtue of resolution 713 (1991) on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to the former Yugoslavia must be reviewed in the light of the impossibility of equating the aggressor and the victim of aggression. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina must be enabled to obtain the military assistance that would enable it to exercise the legitimate right of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter; fourthly, the mechanism for the mandatory enforcement of the no-fly zone in the airspace of Bosnia Herzegovina must be established immediately in order to prevent any violation of the no-fly zone; and fifthly, international observers must be deployed, as a matter of urgency, on Bosnia and Herzegovina's borders with Serbia and Montenegro to prevent the inflow of military supplies from them to the local Serbs in Bosnia Herzegovina.

My delegation has studied the Secretary-General's report, document S/24848, particularly paragraph 12, from which I quote:

> "It seems evident that the Belgrade authorities could, if they so chose, take measures which would have a strongly persuasive effect upon the Serb local authorities, especially in view of the considerable economic dependence of much of the UNPAs upon the FRY." (S/24848, para. 12)

This observation in the Secretary-General's report gives added emphasis to the evidence that puts the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the Belgrade authorities with regard to the deteriorating situation that threatens international peace and security in Bosnia Herzegovina, and gives the lie to the protestations of the Belgrade authorities that they have no control over the local Serbian authorities.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

The report also draws attention to the inadequacies in the monitoring of the ban imposed by the Security Council on military flights in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

> "Subsequent daily reports have shown a number of apparent infringements of the ban by aircraft which appears to be seeking to avoid radar detection". (S/24848, para. 43)

A complete political settlement of the problem of Bosnia and Herzegovina is absolutely essential. My delegation wishes to give its full support to efforts towards that end made by the international conference on Yugoslavia. We also support the draft constitutional framework proposed by the co-chairmen of that conference and accepted by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In that context, I wish to highlight the following points: firstly, a deadline should be set, a time limit on the ongoing negotiations in the Conference, within the working group concerned with the problem of Bosnia and Herzegovina, after which the co-chairmen should furnish the Security Council with their conclusions; secondly, the projected constitutional settlement must be translated into actual reality and the element of urgency must be taken into account in carrying out that constitutional settlement, so that the intransigent party may not try to gain time by protracting the negotiations until it becomes assured that there is no longer a Muslim Bosnian majority to benefit from such constitutional settlement; thirdly, constitutional framework must include stipulations that guarantee the right of safe return to their original areas and compensation for their property to all those who have been displaced or expelled.

At a time when the world raises high the banner of respect for human rights and places it at the top of its priorities, we are appalled to see such

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

an abhorrent aberration as the so-called "ethnic cleansing" being practised openly by the Serbs regardless of the fact that, in concept and in practice, it is nothing but genocide, the most horrible of crimes and the most atrocious of breaches of international humanitarian law. Egypt joins the whole of the international community in condemning these brutal inhuman atrocities and insists that they be stopped immediately, under close international scrutiny. If we carefully study developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we shall find that that "ethnic cleansing" is not something that happened in the heat of hostilities, but is a principal objective of the war. In other words, it is not a result but a cause of that war and a policy that keeps the war going.

My delegation has read the Secretary-General's report (S/24809), as well as the conclusions of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights in Yugoslavia. The report underscores the following: firstly, there is no doubt that the "ethnic cleansing" which is taking place primarily in the areas controlled by the Serbs is related to Serbian political objectives and that the ultimate aim of the "ethnic cleansing" is the incorporation of the areas occupied by the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina in their so-called "greater Serbia"; secondly, the very obvious disparity between the weapons possessed by the Serbs and those in the hands of the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina contributes to the intensification of the operations of "ethnic cleansing" in the areas controlled by the Serbs; thirdly, those operations continue and are being intensified in Bosnia and Herzegovina; fourthly, the principal victims of those atrocities are the Muslims and Croats; fifthly, the Serbian authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina bear the principal and full responsibility for the policy and practices of "ethnic cleansing". The command of the Yugoslav army and the political leadership in the Republic of Serbia share that responsibility.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

The latest international reports include considerable evidence that the Serbs are perpetrating war crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the Commission of Experts established by the Security Council in resolution 780 (1992) should conclude its work and submit its findings and recommendations within the shortest possible time so that the General Assembly may meet and consider the establishment of an ad hoc tribunal to try those responsible for the atrocities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My delegation commends the efforts of the Secretary-General and the relevant United Nations bodies, as well as those of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), whose members have been carrying out their tasks on behalf of the international community as a whole at great risk to themselves. We would refer in this respect to the Secretary-General's report (S/24848), which enumerates the difficulties obstructing the discharge by UNPROFOR of its mandate with regard to the delivery of relief supplies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore it is essential to review, as a matter of urgency, the scope of UNPROFOR's mandate in Bosnia and Herzegovina with a view to expanding that mandate to include: firstly, monitoring the cease-fire; secondly, monitoring the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina; thirdly, verification of the closing down of Serbian concentration camps; and fourthly, the use of force against parties that obstruct delivery of humanitarian relief supplies.

My delegation welcomes Security Council resolution 795 (1992), which authorizes the Secretary-General to establish a presence of the United Nations Protection Force on the borders of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In the same context, the United Nations should take further preventive

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

diplomacy steps by deploying an international observer force in Kosovo, particularly since reports indicate that the Serbian forces have been committing numerous breaches of international law and pursuing "ethnic cleansing" practices in that autonomous region.

The delegation of Egypt should like to point out that any delay in facing up to that situation may result in confronting the United Nations, before long, with a highly complex situation similar to that it now faces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which would lead to a general explosion in that highly sensitive region. My delegation, as one of the sponsors of the draft resolution to be submitted, appeals to all Member States to reaffirm their solidarity with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina who have been the victims of aggression and to do so by giving strong majority support to the draft resolution.

Sir David HANNAY (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Community and its member States.

The tragedy in the former Yugoslavia constitutes a serious threat to peace and stability in the region. It has created immense and unacceptable human suffering. The European Community fully supports the unstinting efforts of Lord Owen and Mr. Vance, under the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, to promote a cessation of hostilities and negotiations for a peaceful settlement. Despite these efforts, the parties have failed to implement many of the agreements reached at the London Conference. No real will for peace has been demonstrated.

The primary responsibility for the conflict and its brutality lies with the present leadership of Serbia and of the Bosnian Serbs. The principal victims of actions by all parties have been the Muslim population of Bosnia

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

and Herzegovina. In defiance of Security Council resolutions the Serb forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina have undertaken a savage campaign of military aggression, "ethnic cleansing" and the persecution and torture of civilians. The renewed attacks in Sarajevo are clearly part of a systematic campaign to seize territory and cities.

Those responsible for all these crimes against humanitarian law by the different sides will be held personally accountable and brought to justice. The Serbian authorities in Belgrade bear an equal responsibility for fomenting the conflict and for failing to use their undoubted influence and resources to restrain it. The European Community calls on the Croatian authorities, for their part, to comply with all Security Council resolutions and to cooperate in good faith with the peace process, since they too carry a share of the responsibility for attacks on the Muslim population.

The European Community is appalled by the systematic detention and rape of Muslim women. It strongly condemns these acts of unspeakable brutality, which form part of a deliberate strategy to terrorize the Muslim community in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to achieve the purpose of "ethnic cleansing". It demands that all detention camps, and in particular camps for women, should be immediately closed. Free and secure access must be given to humanitarian organizations so that all those detained in the camps can be assisted. The Community and its member States will consider favourably what further help could be given to the victims. The European Community has decided on the rapid dispatch of a delegation to investigate and to report urgently to the Foreign Ministers. The European Community calls upon the United Nations to support this mission.

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

The European Community reiterates that the international community will not accept the acquisition of territory by force. Nor will it accept the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The European Community strongly supports the efforts of the Co-Chairmen to arrive at a constitutional settlement based on the proposals made by Ambassador Ahtisaari and on a mutual recognition of the multi-ethnic character of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The right of existence of the different communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be respected and guaranteed.

The European Community pays tribute to the courage and steadfastness of the forces of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and those operating the airlift, and of the European Community Monitoring Mission, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and all other organizations engaged in the dangerous task of peace-keeping and the provision of relief.

In peace-keeping, the countries of the European Community are strongly represented in UNPROFOR, with 5,500 troops in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in addition to nearly 5,000 in Croatia. Under exceptional arrangements for a United Nations force, the Bosnia humanitarian convoy protection operation is being financed by the European Community States themselves, to the tune of an estimated $400 million. The European Community is of course also paying its usual assessed contribution of 32.15 per cent of the cost of other United Nations operations in the former Yugoslavia.

In the humanitarian area the European Community has again been prominent. The contributions of the Community and its member States to

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

humanitarian efforts in the former Yugoslavia now amount to over $610 million. Much of this has gone towards UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other international humanitarian agencies. The Sarajevo airlift, in which several European Community member States are participating, has cost those States many millions of dollars. Over 320,000 refugees from the former Yugoslavia have been given refuge by European Community member States.

Further resources are badly needed. The United Nations stock-taking conference in Geneva on 4 December made it clear that the risk of a major humanitarian tragedy in Bosnia this winter has not been removed. More action is needed to provide protection to the civilian population through the development of safe areas and by providing refuge abroad for particularly vulnerable categories of refugees. The Community and its member States will continue to respond generously to the urgent humanitarian requirements, and have set up a task force for this purpose.

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

The Serbian nation faces a clear and imminent choice. If there is a radical change of policy and genuine cooperation in the peace process, Serbia will be gradually readmitted to the international community. The European Community supports the efforts of those political forces that are trying to bring Serbia back from the brink.

If, on the other hand, the Belgrade regime continues its present policies, the international community will take sterner action, including tightening and extending existing sanctions and preventing Serb participation in any international body. That will totally isolate Serbia for a long time to come.

The European Community's member States will send observers to the forthcoming elections, under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Co-operation (CSCE) in Europe. They will draw the appropriate conclusions if the present authorities do not allow fair and just procedures.

The European Community fully supports the action taken in the Adriatic by the Western European Union (WEU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to enforce sanctions and the arms embargo. The Community and its member States will take further steps to assist in tightening sanctions on the Danube, and urge the riparian States to play their full part.

The European Community also calls for the rapid dispatch of observers to the border between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In view of the many violations of Security Council resolution 786 (1992), the European Community believes the Security Council should examine the situation in the light of paragraph 6 of that resolution.

(Sir David Hannay,
United Kingdom)

The European Community welcomes the decision by the Co-Chairmen to hold a meeting, at ministerial level, of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on 16 December. The meeting should dissuss the series of measures necessary in support of the Co-Chairmen to intensify pressure on the parties to end the bloodshed and to negotiate seriously on the Bosnian constitution.

That meeting will of course discuss the range of other problems throughout the former Yugoslavia. I will mention only two of them now.

First, the autonomy of Kosovo within Serbia must be restored. All parties concerned over Kosovo, especially Serbia, must exercise restraint. The human rights of the Kosovars must be respected.

Secondly, the European Community welcomed Security Council resolution 795 (1992) on the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, authorizing the Secretary-General to establish a presence of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in that Republic.

As I have outlined, the European Community and its member States are making a massive commitment in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the other parts of the former Yugoslavia. In peacemaking we are doing so through the joint European Community-United Nations International Conference, and in peace-keeping through the European Community monitoring mission and our contributions of troops and money to UNPROFOR, through our contributions to the humanitarian agencies, the airlift and the protection of humanitarian convoys and through our efforts to strengthen sanctions as a weapon against the Serbian authorities. We are doing a lot, and we stand ready to do a lot more.

(Sir David Hannay,
United Kingdom)

Difficult as the situation is in the former Yugoslavia, we must persevere. The European Community will continue to give priority to political means in order to resolve the crisis in Yugoslavia. But given the gravity of this tragic situation, it has no choice but to promote and participate in further initiatives which the international community may be obliged to undertake.

Mr. ALLAGANY (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): The crisis in the former Yugoslavia, especially the situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, continues to pose a major threat to international peace and security and is cause for grave concern. It is essential for international bodies dealing with the problems of the former Yugoslavia to achieve concrete results.

Although Security Council resolutions 770 (1992) and 771 (1992) were adopted a long time ago, and despite the passage of more than 70 days since the conclusion of the London Conference on a settlement of the conflict in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, no substantial progress has been achived towards the implementation of Security Council resolutions relevant to Bosnia and Herzegovina or of the resolutions of the London Conference on that question.

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina remains the victim of the genocidal war waged by Serbian forces and by forces supported by Serbia and Montenegro, claiming thousands of innocent lives and displacing a large portion of the population from their homes and property.

(Mr. Allagany,
Saudi Arabia)

In response to an invitation extended by the Custodian of the Two Holy Places, King Fahd bin-Abdul Aziz al-Saud, the sixth special session of the conference of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference was convened at Jeddah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 1 and 2 December 1992 to examine the deteriorating situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At that session the Organization of the Islamic Conference adopted its resolution 1/6, in which it condemned the stubborn rejection by Serbia and Montenegro of all relevant international resolutions, the intransigence of the Serbian leadership in defiance of the international community and its failure to comply with the resolutions of the London Conference.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference called upon the Security Council to deploy United Nations forces along Bosnia's borders with Serbia and Montenegro to detect and prevent the delivery of any direct or indirect assistance to Serbian paramilitary and military forces. The resolution also called upon the United Nations and other organizations to consider promptly the establishment of safe havens, in close coordination with all parties involved in the current humanitarian efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while avoiding any action that could encourage the Serbian policy of "ethnic cleansing".

The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights and a group of rapporteurs under the Economic and Social Council have prepared a detailed report on the serious, massive violations of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

The Secretary-General's note dated 6 November 1992 says:

"The military conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is aimed at achieving 'ethnic cleansing', remains a matter of particular and most urgent concern." (A/47/635, para. 1)

To the international community the ethnic cleansing that is taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the hands of the Serbian forces

"does not appear to be the consequence of the war, but rather its goal." (ibid., para. 6)

In fact, the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina are "threatened with extermination" (ibid., para. 5) unless the international community takes certain measures to save them.

The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is an independent sovereign State, like any other. In addition, it is a Member of the United Nations. The Security Council has adopted more than one resolution affirming its interest in the preservation of the territorial integrity and territorial sovereignty of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In an attempt to put an end to the hostilities, the Council adopted resolutions that banned military aircraft from the air space of Bosnia and Herzegovina, placed heavy artillery under international supervision, and demanded the release of all detainees and prisoners of war, the closure of concentration camps and cessation of the policy of "ethnic cleansing".

Regrettably, these resolutions are not being implemented. We are witnessing breaches of the prohibition against military aircraft and failure to deliver vital humanitarian assistance to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These are grave violations of the principles and rules of international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention and the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

In this regard, I should point out that the facts on the ground show that Security Council resolution 713 (1991), which imposed an arms embargo on the Republics of the former Yugoslavia, did not serve the interests of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As the Serbs have inherited the former Yugoslavia's arsenal of lethal weapons, the arms embargo imposed on the Republics of the former Yugoslavia affects only the victim of the aggression. Thus, implementation of the Security Council resolution imposing the arms embargo has inflicted extremely severe damage on the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and has rendered them unable to defend themselves.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia feels that there is a pressing need to work within the framework of international legality to help the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina exercise its legitimate right to individual and collective self-defence under Chapter VII, article 51, of the United Nations Charter. We call upon the international community to provide every possible material, military or moral support that would enable the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to exercise that right. This will necessitate exemption of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the arms embargo, which, in the first place, was imposed only to protect the people of that country from the continuing hideous Serbian aggression.

We call upon the Security Council to undertake a quick review of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to implementation of its relevant resolutions, including resolution 752 (1992), as well as discharge of the commitments secured at the London Conference.

The gravity of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina necessitates effective and prompt action by the General Assembly and the Security Council,

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

under Chapter VII of the Charter, with a view to restoring peace in that Republic, containing the crisis and preventing it from spreading to all the other parts of the former Yugoslavia and erupting into a regional confrontation.

The Security Council has clearly succeeded in consolidating peace in numerous parts of the world, especially through elaboration of the concept of collective security, which imbues the Council's resolutions with the credibility that makes them enforceable and mandatory. It is our hope that this will apply in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina too so that the people of that Republic may enjoy their right to life in an atmosphere of peace and stability.

Mr. HASSAN (Sudan) (interpretation from Arabic): Today, as we debate the lamentable situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we find ourselves in a sad and embarrassing position vis-à-vis the genocidal excesses now taking place in that republic.

General Assembly resolution 46/242 of 25 August 1992 and subsequent Security Council resolutions are very explicit. They call for a halt to Serbian aggression and for a search for a peaceful solution to the problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite successive resolutions, the aggression and the massive violations of human rights have not not ceased. The Secretary-General's informative report entitled "The Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (A/47/747) dated 3 December 1992, sheds light on the fact that that situation continues to worsen day by day and on the arrogance of the Serbian forces, who defy United Nations resolutions and, thereby, discredit the Organization.

(Mr. Hassan, Sudan)

Despite all the resolutions on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, reports tell of further violations of human rights - in particular, the process of "ethnic cleansing", the expulsion of citizens of Sarajevo, the raping of women, and the creation of obstacles to the provision of United Nations humanitarian assistance. In the city of Sarajevo, electricity and water have been cut off despite the harshness of winter.

In his two reports A/47/418-S/24516 and A/47/635-S/24766, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights confirms that massive violations of human rights continue to be the norm in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the hands of the aggressors. Those violations specially target the Muslim inhabitants whose situation is described as tragic.

(Mr. Hassan, Sudan)

The Special Rapporteur concludes that there is an overriding need to adopt urgent resolutions in order to put an end to those inhuman excesses.

The international response to the programme of work covering the needs of the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina was not commensurate with the hopes attached to it or with the needs of those inhabitants. There is a considerable shortfall in the financing of the programmes and activities proposed by the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization. We believe that adequate financing would go a long way towards mitigating the suffering of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also believe that opening more airports to flights of international humanitarian relief could indeed limit the consequences of this disaster.

My delegation believes that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be exempted from the military embargo imposed on the former Yugoslavia. Bosnia and Herzegovina should be permitted to import the military equipment it needs to defend itself. This is essential, for although the embargo may appear to be justified, in reality it enables Serbia to have the upper hand because it manufactures locally the weapons it fights with while the Bosnian Muslims have to import the weapons they need to defend themselves. The embargo has deprived them of that means of legitimate self-defence.

The Summit meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held in Jedda, Saudi Arabia, underscored the need to exempt Bosnia and Herzegovina from the embargo proclaimed against the former Yugoslavia. We believe that such exemption would deter the Serbian aggressors from persisting in their inhuman aggression.

(Mr. Hassan, Sudan)

We believe that the Security Council - the supreme guardian of international peace and security - must give the green light to all necessary measures to end Serbian aggression, as well as to end violations of humanitarian law in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina is an independent and sovereign Member State of the United Nations. There must be an end to the bloodshed there. Reason dictates that the conflict must not be allowed to spill over into other regions. In other cases, the Security Council has demonstrated its ability to maintain the peace and security of several regions. Why, then, has it not adopted similar resolutions in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina? The silence encountered whenever this question comes up, makes people wonder whether the reason behind this failure to send troops to Bosnia and Herzegovina is the desire to prevent the emergence of an Islamic State in Europe. Such an attitude requires a great deal of courage on the part of the international community in facing up to the unacceptable realities of the situation of Muslim minorities throughout the world, the threats facing those minorities and the drive to blot out their religion and cultural heritage. The international community should have the courage to ask itself those questions and to face up to those realities.

The plight of Bosnia and Herzegovina should move the international conscience, and move the United Nations to rise to its historic responsibility and adopt the resolutions that measure up to its responsibility and to the magnitude of the disaster.

We look forward to the advent of peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also look forward to the day when the criminals who committed and continue to

(Mr. Huq, Bangladesh)

commit those crimes against humanity will be brought to book so that a lesson may be taught to anyone who may think of perpetrating similar atrocities against the weak and the defenceless.

The draft resolution submitted under this agenda item enjoys our full support. We believe it contains all the elements that could contribute to the restoration of the territorial integrity and the stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the entire region. We call upon Member States to support this draft resolution.

Mr. HUQ (Bangladesh): As we deliberate the issue today, the Serbian aggression and onslaught against Bosnia and Herzegovina are continuing without respite in the bitter cold winter months. Even at this moment, pillage, plunder, killing and all forms of atrocities are continuing unabated against the Bosnian people and particularly against the Muslim minorities. Brute aggression has increased so much that civilian areas in Sarajevo itself have now been targeted to bear the brunt of the worst shelling experienced by the besieged city since the outbreak of war. The momentum seems to have increased soon after the Security Council adopted a resolution last month to tighten sanctions against Serbia. It seems clear that the Serbs are not affected by the sanctions, and therefore are not inclined to abide by resolutions adopted by the Security Council.

Serbia has already acquired over 70 per cent of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and is now on the verge of overrunning Sarajevo. It would indeed be an unmitigated tragedy if we failed to act decisively, even now as Serbia wantonly persists in its policy of aggrandizement, with the ultimate intention of occupying Sarajevo and completing its conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bangladesh firmly believes that the United Nations, which acted

(Mr. Huq, Bangladesh)

with such unity and decisiveness during the Gulf war, can display once again the political will required to enforce its decision and reverse Serbian aggression. Bangladesh cannot accept the seizure of any territory by force anywhere. Therefore, any solution must ensure the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are anguished at the worsening of the tragic situation in that country. The indignation of the people of Bangladesh has been reflected in the resolution adopted by our Parliament, unequivocally condemning the unprovoked aggression against Bosnia. The resolution also urged that we, the United Nations, expeditiously adopt appropriate measures to end Serbian atrocities against the men, women and children of Bosnia.

Our position has been articulated before in the Security Council, as well as in the General Assembly. A strong signal should be conveyed to the Serbians to release all prisoners and detainees from concentration camps and to abolish all such camps immediately.

(Mr. Huq, Bangladesh)

Serbia must be made to realize that by pursuing the policy of "ethnic cleansing" it has blatantly violated the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and therefore must be responsible for its crimes against humanity.

It is painfully obvious that all our resolutions so far have failed to discourage Serbian expansionism and the policy of "ethnic cleansing". The resolution on the arms embargo against the former Yugoslavia was obviously intended to deter the aggressor. However, its effect on the victims of aggression has been devastating in the face of the heavily equipped Serbs and the continued flow of arms and ammunitions to them, in violation of the embargo. The Bosnian minorities have remained helpless targets for elimination. To prevent their extinction, they must be permitted to exercise their inherent right of self-defence against their enemy, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. We are again making known our firm belief that there should be a partial and selective lifting of the arms embargo contained in Security Council resolution 713 (1991) so as to enable Bosnians to defend themselves and to deter Serbians from pursuing their expansionist policy. This, we feel, is an indispensable first step in deterring the aggressor and persuading it to seek a negotiated political settlement.

We believe that there is a widespread sentiment among members of the Assembly in favour of a more decisive approach to dissuading Serbians from continuing their human carnage in Bosnia. The absence of effective steps, at this stage, would aggravate the situation and result in the conflict's spreading to the south, to Macedonia and Kosovo. My delegation, therefore, strongly feels that now is the time seriously to consider collective

(Mr. Huq, Bangladesh)

enforcement measures to halt Serbian aggression in areas of Bosnia occupied by Serbia; seal the Serbian border with Bosnia; halt the flow of weapons and other support; enforce the ban on Serbian flights, including flights of military helicopters; and ensure compliance with all decisions of the Security Council.

It is time for us to ponder seriously whether we have any other option but to adopt a strong and effective resolution and implement it with firmness and determination. If we are to save minorities, including the Muslims in Bosnia, and Bosnia itself, we must act resolutely, and act now, or our faith in this great institution, the United Nations, will wither away with the mounting miseries and sorrows of Bosnia. To reinvigorate our confidence and trust in this institution and in ourselves as a conscientious community of nations that can act speedily and effectively in times of crisis, we must bring this human drama of pain and suffering to a speedy close. My delegation believes that the present debate in the Assembly will culminate in effective measures to put an end to this catastrophe, something that so far has eluded us. Let us not let this worthy opportunity pass us by.

Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros): What will it take for the international community to become sensitized to the horror stories of the savage acts committed by the Serbian forces against the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina? Do we not see, do we not read about, the unspeakable crimes, bordering more and more on savagery, that the media - television and newspapers - graphically feed us daily, crimes that are taking place in the heart of civilized Europe, in the twentieth century?

Europe, where is your soul? When will your conscience be aroused? Has history taught you nothing? What lesson did you learn from the Holocaust, or

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

do you enjoy being blamed? Be reminded, then, that this time it will be not a few million Jews, but a billion Muslims who hold you responsible for what is happening to their brothers and sisters in Bosnia - unless, of course, you decide to take your responsibilities seriously.

Dear Europe, are you satisfied to be a second-rate Power? Because in order for you to be considered great, your actions should speak louder than your words. By its unilateral action to help the Somali people, the United States of America has shown the world what greatness is all about. We are all grateful to them for their gesture. Now it is your turn, Europe, to show the world your greatness by doing everything in your power to solve the Yugoslav problem, the mess created by the Serbs.

The human suffering caused by the aggression of Serbia and Montenegro through its puppet Serbian nationalists against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim of "ethnic cleansing", has been allowed to continue for too long by the international community. This neglect has caused too much pain and suffering, and aroused deep emotions, anxiety and desperation in the Islamic community throughout the world.

The position of the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros on the situation in Bosnia has been clearly spelled out in various forums. However, increasingly disturbed by the absence of virtually any effective action to stop the Serbs' savagery against the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we take this opportunity to reiterate our stand. The international community and the United Nations in particular, have an obligation to protect every United Nations Member State against brutal aggression. We should not forget that Bosnia and Herzegovina, like Slovenia and Croatia, are independent States.

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

They are independent because that is what their people wish, and we in the international community have confirmed their aspirations by accepting them as members of this Organization.

Having accepted Bosnia and Herzegovina as a Member State, the Organization has the moral responsibility to guarantee its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The United Nations cannot and should not be an indifferent, passive witness to what is taking place in Bosnia. What is happening there is not, as some of our colleagues would have us believe, a civil war; it is nothing less than a war of aggression supported and instigated by the authorities in Belgrade.

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

The moment has arrived for the Security Council, acting on behalf of the international community, to prove wrong the perception held by uneducated Muslim masses of the double standards of the United Nations in dealing with aggression. The impression is that the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council, has not done enough to stop the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is true that the Council has devoted considerable time to the question. However, it is the opinion of many that is has failed to address the fundamental issue, which is aggression. Most of the resolutions adopted by the Council deal with the humanitarian aspect of the problem, which, although very important, is not the core of the problem. The main issue of the aggression by Serbia and Montenegro against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina has not been adequately addressed by the Council.

My delegation, like many others, is convinced that the time has come for the Security Council to authorize the use of all necessary means by Member States, in cooperation with the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to put an end to the Serbian aggression. Any further hesitation will have serious effects on peace and security in the Balkans and on international peace and security, as the Serbs will be tempted to spread their terror to Macedonia, Kosovo, Sanjak and Vojvodina, automatically inflaming the whole of southeastern Europe.

We are encouraged to hear that those members of the Security Council that were once adamantly opposed to the forcible implementation of the no-fly zone in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Serbs use fighter planes to decimate the people, are now willing to accept enforcement measures. We hope that it will not take them long to realize that time is running out, and that the dilemma the world is facing today is no longer whether the international community

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

should use force but when and how it should be used in order to enforce peace at the minimum cost of lives.

The use of force to stop the aggression has become a necessity, since it has become more and more evident that the appeals for peaceful negotiations, the cautious peace-keeping and limited humanitarian aid will not solve any problem in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. On the contrary, the Serbian side has misused the good will of the international negotiators, accomplishing most of its military goals in the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My delegation fully supports the repeated appeals of the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina that his country be allowed to defend itself. We subscribe to the idea of the partial and selective lifting of the arms embargo on the former Yugoslavia imposed by Security Council resolution 713 (1991). We are firmly convinced that the Council is duty bound to lift the arms embargo in order to allow the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina to import the heavy arms it needs to defend itself.

It is true that in most cases prohibiting arms sales tends to dampen a conflict while encouraging arms sales tends to deepen it. However, in the case of aggression like that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the aggressor outguns its victim, allowing arms to be imported cannot but have a positive impact on the morale of the victim and dissuade the aggressor, particularly when we are convinced that there is no desire on the part of the Serbian aggressors to settle the matter at the negotiating table.

From what we have heard during this debate, we are further convinced that the Serbian aggressor has as its single goal the elimination of Muslims from Bosnia and Herzegovina at any cost. We should therefore not fool ourselves

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

into believing that the Serbs will understand the civilized language of negotiations. The only language the Serbs understand is force. We should then have the courage and political will to take decisions towards that end.It is only when the Serbs realize that their goals are unattainable by force that they will have the incentive to search for a peaceful solution to the problem.

The only language bullies and aggressors understand is brutal force, and since it is clear that those who have the power to deter aggression by massive military intervention do not have the political will to act, does not the Council have the moral responsibility and obligation to give a fighting chance to the victim of aggression? We have no right to put the aggressor on an equal footing with its victim, particularly when we all agree that the aggressor happens to be the one with heavy weaponry. What moral justification does the Security Council, which is the organ entrusted with the maintenance of peace and security and which is supposed to protect the weak from the strong, have for preventing the weak victims of aggression from exercising the right to defend themselves, particularly when the Council lacks the political will to help them?

In the name of the dead and dying heros of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the name of future martyrs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the name of the young children and women and the orphans and the widows of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the name of all those who suffer morally because of their inability to alleviate the plight of their brothers and sisters in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the name of all those for whom we are duty bound to speak out because their voices cannot be heard, we urge and call upon the Security Council to lift without further delay the arms embargo on the State of Bosnia and

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

Herzegovina. We further request those that are in a position to provide appropriate assistance that will help the Bosnians to deter Serbian aggression to hasten to do so.

In conclusion, we have to state that time is running out for this prestigious body to act. The fatal hour is tolling and therefore we must take decisions that will not allow history to judge us harshly. The credibility of the United Nations is being tested. For over six months we have allowed the Serbs to kill and displace the Bosnian Muslims and the Croats. A catastrophic war has been raging in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the conflagration threatens to spill over into the other parts of the former Yugoslavia - and all because of the Serbians' desire for greater, pure and homogeneous Serbian territory. The time has come for the Assembly to send a firm, unambiguous message to the Serbs that the patience of the international community has run out, by asking the Security Council to adopt measures that will deter the Serbs from engaging in their aggressive behaviour and to give a clear mandate for the enforcement of those measures by all means, including the use of force. We appeal to all members to support the draft resolution which will be presented at the end of the debate on this question.

Mr. AKŞİN (Turkey): My delegation is joining in this debate in the General Assembly to voice once again Turkey's indignation and frustration at the continuing deterioration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On 21 August 1992 my delegation, along with the other members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, took steps to introduce a new item into the agenda of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly with a view to its consideration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following the approval of our request by the General Committee, the General Assembly was convened the following week and, after a thorough debate, it adopted its resolution 46/242 by an overwhelming majority.

At the time, we entertained the hope that perhaps those who were waging a criminal war of annihilation against the defenceless Bosnians would heed the collective voice of the international community and relent. These hopes have been dashed. If anything, the Serbian aggressors are pursuing their objectives with greater ferocity.

Four months after our first debate in this session of the Assembly, our appeals contained in resolution 46/242 are being totally disregarded. The Security Council continues to be defied and its resolutions disobeyed. The commitments undertaken at the London Conference by Belgrade and its surrogates in Bosnia have no meaning, and cease-fires are negotiated only to be broken within hours. The principles of the Charter concerning refraining from the use of force to settle differences are being flouted with impunity as Serbian gunmen target defenceless civilians in their cowardly war of aggression. Monstrous crimes are being committed in total disregard of international humanitarian law. "Ethnic cleansing" is being pursued with genocidal thoroughness.

(Mr. Akşin, Turkey)

All of this is taking place before the eyes of everyone. The media are there to report it. The United Nations Protection Force is on the spot to register all the Serbian shells that descend on the historic city of Sarajevo and its unfortunate inhabitants. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights has documented the systematic violation of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Serbs. We all know who the aggressors are and who the victims.

And yet, we seem to be unable to stop the carnage or relieve the human suffering. How can this be? At the beginning of this session we had a long debate on "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277). Scores of delegations made statements from this rostrum expressing their views on the future role of the United Nations in upholding the new world order. Was all of that just rhetoric? Can we do no more for the Bosnians than wring our hands in helplessness and provide humanitarian assistance to relieve our consciences? The forceful action taken in Somalia should serve as a model for our future course in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Turkey has taken the position, from the very beginning of this crisis, that resolute international action is essential to stop aggression. My Government put forward a plan as long ago as June that envisaged limited military action to restore peace and allow for a negotiated settlement. We have also made numerous appeals to the Security Council calling for decisive action. We have taken individual action as well as collective action within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to bring the Bosnian nightmare to an end. We have indicated our readiness to make a substantial military contribution to any enforcement action that the United

(Mr. Akşin, Turkey)

Nations might undertake. We have provided relief supplies to the Bosnians by sea and by air and we have strained our resources to accommodate many thousands of Bosnians who were victims of "ethnic cleansing". Recently, Turkey took the initiative to convene, on 25 November 1992, the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Balkan and Regional Countries in Istanbul, where the participating countries considered the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and underlined the danger that the conflict might spill over into adjacent regions in the former Yugoslavia and beyond.

In this connection, we welcome the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 795 (1992), allowing for the deployment of United Nations forces in the Republic of Macedonia. We hope the Republic of Macedonia will soon occupy its rightful place in the United Nations. Finally, my Government called for the Commission on Human Rights to hold its second special session, which took place on 30 November and 1 December, to consider the human rights situation in the former Yugoslavia.

Unfortunately, none of these actions produced the desired result, and the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to deteriorate. The time has now come for the total membership of the United Nations to adopt a resolution which will convey the clear message to Belgrade and its agents that we are determined to stop this terrible war and that we shall urge the Security Council to take whatever concrete actions are necessary to secure respect for international law.

My delegation participated actively in the preparation of the draft resolution before us, which will, we hope, be adopted by consensus. The elements contained in this draft resolution are the minimum required for restoring the frayed credibility of our Organization.

(Mr. Akşin, Turkey)

We have a right to expect the Security Council to carry out its responsibilities and enforce its resolutions so as to secure an end to the Serbian aggression. If this cannot be done, the Bosnians must be freed from the restrictions imposed on their inherent right to defend themselves. They must be allowed to acquire the arms they so desperately need. The brazen violation of the flight restrictions imposed by resolution 781 (1992) must not be allowed to go on. After several hundred such violations on a routine basis, the time has come for the Security Council to carry out its commitment to enforce this resolution by effective action. The Serbian war criminals must be given a warning that we mean to hold them accountable for their terrible deeds. The embattled Bosnians must be provided with militarily protected areas where they can find temporary security without having to abandon their ancestral homeland.

The draft resolution that we are considering is the minimum that we can accept, given the gravity of the situation and the enormity of the Serbian transgressions. To attempt to dilute or attenuate any of its provisions would be a betrayal of the Bosnians and a disservice to the United Nations.

The sort of actions now taking place in the former Yugoslavia are reminiscent of the actions that took place in various parts of the world in the 1930s. The League of Nations failed to deal with these crises; the Powers which had the means to stop the rot indulged in appeasement of totalitarian regimes; and the result was a world war. We must draw the correct lessons from history and act with courage and resolution, or all our high hopes at the ending of the cold war will be drowned in new wars of aggression in other regions of the globe. The United Nations is a dynamic instrument that is capable of producing energetic initiatives and strong action. It is up to its

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

Members, and especially the members of the Security Council, to use the United Nations to maintain peace and uphold decency in Bosnia and throughout the rest of the world. This is a historic responsibility which no Member State should abdicate.

Mr. JACOVIDES (Cyprus): Cyprus fully shares the views expressed by previous speakers during this important debate on the gravity of the situation and the need to take remedial action, as we also stressed in our statement of 24 August this year and on other occasions. The importance and timeliness of this debate, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/747), is self-evident. As we now speak in this forum, the violence which for many months now has wrought havoc on the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina continues unabated while the principles of international and humanitarian law and of the United Nations Charter are being flouted in a most blatant manner.

(Mr. Jacovides, Cyprus)

The applicable principles are not in doubt. Aggression can neither be excused nor be allowed to prevail. The abhorrent practice of "ethnic cleansing" should not only be condemned but also be rectified wherever it occurs. The acquisition of territory by force is unacceptable. The international community can neither condone nor tolerate so-called new realities on the ground that are born of aggression and occupation. Persons displaced by force from their ancestral homes and lands have the right to return in conditions of safety. United Nations resolutions, and in particular binding decisions of the Security Council, should be effectively implemented.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a test case of the effectiveness of the United Nations as the collective organ for international peace and security in this new world order.

Cyprus strictly abides by all the Security Council resolutions on former Yugoslavia as it does in all other cases, whether involving South Africa, Iraq or any other place, irrespective of any repercussions or any loss, financial or otherwise, that such compliance may entail. We strongly believe that, as we have advocated for many years, compliance with the dictates of the international community as expressed in binding United Nations resolutions is a moral and legal imperative. There should be no double standards and no selective application. This imperative has to be stressed, since even very recently we heard the Foreign Minister of a country playing a leading role on the item we are now considering declare in relation to a unanimously adopted resolution of the Security Council - resolution 789 (1992) - that every country can at its discretion accept some resolutions and reject others, according to its interests.

(Mr. Jacovides, Cyprus)

As I stressed in our statement of 24 August, and as is generally acknowledged, we in Cyprus have had our own bitter experience of "ethnic cleansing" in the wake of the 1974 invasion. The situation we have been tragically confronted with is also a test case for the effectiveness of the United Nations, and while no two situations are identical, there are many parallels, and the same principles are equally applicable. We expect the international community - and particularly those countries which, rightly in this case, show much concern and sensitivity to the genuine plight of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina - to be equally concerned and sensitive to human-rights violations closer to home, and to other situations in which the same principles apply and unanimously adopted United Nations resolutions point the way to a just and lasting solution. As our esteemed Secretary-General rightly stressed in his outstanding report "An Agenda for Peace",

> "The principles of the Charter must be applied consistently, not selectively, for if the perception should be of the latter, trust will wane and with it the moral authority which is the greatest and most unique quality of that instrument." (A/47/277, para. 82)

It is in this spirit, and because of our conviction that the Charter principles and resolutions should indeed be applied universally and not selectively, along with our genuine concern for the plight of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with whom we fully empathize, that we support all efforts based on the Charter of the United Nations that are aimed at putting an end to the ongoing tragedy of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We do so on the merits of the situation, convinced that all burning international issues deserve to be approached objectively within the parameters clearly set

(Mr. Jacovides, Cyprus)

out by the Charter and along the lines of the relevant Security Council resolutions and that human tragedy clearly transcends religious or other considerations.

Before closing, let me once again remind the Assembly that what the suffering people of Bosnia and Herzegovina need is not more words and high-flown statements. What they have a right to expect, and indeed what circumstances dictate, is that all of us, individually and collectively - while not for a moment easing our efforts for the peaceful solution of the political problem - should do our utmost in practical terms to mitigate the horrendous sufferings and to offer comfort and assistance to the innocent victims. The misery and suffering we have witnessed will no doubt increase dramatically with the onset of winter, and if we forget our humanitarian responsibilities, the price will be paid with the lives of the suffering people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Let us not forget the faces of the thousands of innocent children whose future rests in our hands. Let us unequivocally condemn "ethnic cleansing" and the other unspeakable brutalities perpetrated against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and offer practical assistance to ease their plight in every way possible.

Mr. MONTGOMERY (United States of America): The General Assembly meets today to discuss once again the tragic situation in former Yugoslavia. Despite the efforts of the international community, this crisis has continued to worsen, thereby endangering the creation of a new international era based on freedom, democracy and the rule of law.

Ethnic hatred and chauvinism are not unique to Yugoslavia. As Secretary of State Eagleburger recently told the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), former Yugoslavia is a mirror of our darker selves - a

(Mr. Montgomery, United States)

mirror of what all of us could become if we were to succumb to the ethnic hatred and the intolerance of diversity which we have seen this year in Western Europe and North America as well. Yugoslavia reminds us that our hopes for living in a more peaceful and civilized world are inextricably linked to the way our countries conduct themselves at home.

The United States believes that the time has come to endorse stronger measures to reverse an intolerable situation. We must identify the perpetrators of crimes against humanity in former Yugoslavia by name and ensure that they will be brought to justice in person. We must demand strict enforcement of United Nations sanctions, thereby increasing the pressure on those who continue to prosecute the war, and we must redouble our efforts to prevent the war from spilling over into neighbouring regions.

The United States supports the clearly stated message of the draft resolution, namely, that decisive and effective action by the international community is an important element in stopping this crisis from spiralling further out of control and posing a threat to the peace, security and prosperity of other Member States in the region.

There is no doubt that the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is continuing to worsen, that hundreds of thousands of people are facing slow death through cold and starvation, that atrocities continue on an appalling scale and that the clear will of the international community, as expressed through this Organization, has been cynically and deliberately flouted by those at Belgrade and their allies in pursuit of their sordid aims.

On 25 September 1991, former Secretary of State Baker told the Security Council that the United States cannot and will not accept repression and the use of force by any of the Yugoslav parties to solve political problems. That

(Mr. Montgomery, United States)

remains our basic policy, and the principles we have emphasized from the beginning of this crisis must still guide our actions. We cannot accept or reward the acquisition of territory by force. We cannot allow unprovoked and brutal aggression against States Members of this Organization. We must insist on unconditional observance of all relevant Security Council resolutions by all parties at all times, and we must continue our work to restore peace in the Balkans and safeguard the freedom of all the peoples that have suffered so much in the past two years.

The United States believes further that those who have intentionally inflicted this catastrophe on the peoples of former Yugoslavia and those who have committed heinous war crimes and atrocities against civilians must be brought to trial and punished for their actions. The international community must also be resolute in condemning the odious policy of "ethnic cleansing".

(Mr. Montgomery, United States)

We join with the draft resolution's authors in saluting the courageous men and women of the United Nations Protective Force (UNPROFOR) and other United Nations agencies, the European Community and private voluntary organizations from around the world who have put their lives on the line to aid their fellow human beings at a time of crisis.

The United States joins with others in this Assembly in working energetically towards a peaceful resolution of the crisis in former Yugoslavia. We remain hopeful that a resolute stand by the international community will help persuade those who are responsible for this tragedy to reconsider and join us in building a more peaceful, civilized world.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.